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CPW Report No. 18 -- USSR

(1 - 15 December 1951)

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SUMMARY

The Moscow Peace Partisans Congress and the Stalin Constitution Day are both heavily publicized. Attention to ideological weaknesses in the Ukraine is revived by the Central Committee of the Ukrainian Communist Party which assures the All-Union Communist Party of greater vigilance in the future. The shortcomings attributed to local Communist organizations cover the usual wide range of Party activities. There is increasing reference to anti-religious propaganda. An ailing livestock industry as well as continued technical breakdowns in agriculture are implicitly admitted in a special decision of the Ukrainian Communist Party. In industry, much stress is laid on the sacrifice of quality in production to quantity.

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IDEOLOGICAL AFFAIRS

The Ukraine: Lingering Bourgeois-Nationalist Sentiments: In a pungent 2500-word editorial, RADYANSKA UKRAINA (7 December) quotes the decision of the Ukrainian Communist Party urging "a radical improvement in the leadership of all branches of ideological work." These branches are specified as Ukrainian Soviet literature, arts and science, the press, people's education, propaganda, and mass political, cultural and educational work. The recent plenary session of the Central Committee of the Ukrainian Communist Party, the paper says, noted "all kinds of manifestations of bourgeois ideology," particularly Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism. This, it says, applies "especially to the intelligentsia." The depth of nationalist sentiments among the Ukrainian intelligentsia is implicitly stressed in the Central Committee's reminder that "the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist State was established as an integral and indivisible part of the great Soviet Union," and that was accomplished with the "assistance" of the Great Russian people.

The ideological situation in the Republic is further aggravated by the "atmosphere of nepotism and mutual praise" prevailing in a number of organizations where criticism and self-criticism "are forgotten." It is in this atmosphere, says the editorial, that the cosmopolitan poet Pervomaisky's "The Dove" and "The Woman by the Golden Gates" continue to bask in the wrong manner (nepravilne). Much of the blame, according to the Central Committee, rests on the Committee for Arts and the Committee for Cultural Educational Establishments. They lack of interest in the creative efforts of the artists and theatrical workers who, as a result, have failed "to meet the increased demands" of the people. Particularly weak in ideology are Kharkov, Kiev, Lvov, Dniepropetrovsk, Voroshilovgrad, Kamenets-Podolsk, Zhitomir, Ternopol and Drohobych oblasts. The ideological and political education of the theatrical workers in these oblasts have been neglected. The same applies to the philharmonic societies, choir and musical collectives.

The Ukrainian Ministry of Cinematography "has not liquidated" its shortcomings as evidenced by the film "Bolshaya Zhizn" (The Great Life). There is no indication as to why this film is "unworthy."

Referring to the Ukrainian press and its responsibility for the poor ideological situation, RADYANSKA UKRAINA lists a number of important newspapers and periodicals, including itself, which "often publish weak and ideologically harmful works," and seldom criticize literature and art. Named among the delinquent newspapers and periodicals are:

Papers	1. RADYANSKA UKRAINA	Magazines	1. BILSHOVYK UKRAINY
	2. PRAVDA UKRAINY		2. DNIEPRO
	3. LITERATURNAYA GAZETA		3. VITCHYZNA
	4. RADYANSKE MYSTETSTVO		4. SOVETSKAYA UKRAINA
			5. ZHOVTEN

The Central Committee of the Ukrainian Communist Party, continues the paper, has not overlooked the "serious shortcomings" in the work of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, particularly in the treatment of philosophy, Ukrainian history and literature, folklore, ethnography and linguistics. These shortcomings are serious enough to need attention "as soon as possible." Alluding to what might be construed as pressure from above, the Central Committee decision concludes with the following note:

The Ukrainian Communist Party...assured the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party and especially Comrade Stalin that the Ukrainian Bolsheviks will do everything possible toward the elimination of the shortcomings.

A report from Vinnytsa (7 December) reveals that the oblast Party Committee urges the "raising of the ideological level" in the work of the Society for the Propagation of Political and Scientific Knowledge, the Oblast Cinema Administration, the VINNITSKA PRAVDA editorial bureau, the Oblast Radio Information Committee and a number of rayon Party committees. Complaints of shortcomings in various aspects of ideological life are also heard from Proskurov, Zhitomir, Kirovograd

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and Alma Ata. RADYANSKE PODILYE (4 December), for example, says that the oblast Party attitude toward ideological work is so superficial that in some city committees "the same lecture (has been read) for three months now." This is typical of Polonsky, Shepetovsky, Izyaslavsky, Dunayevetsky and Kamenets-Podolsky rayons where all where all ideological work "is being carried out unsystematically and without a reliable plan." This low ideological level, concludes the editorial, has also led to the discovery of "blunders and distortions" in the teaching of Ukrainian literature and language in Mikhailovsky rayon.

A broadcast from Kiev (9 December) refers to the recent oblast Party session which admitted that Kiev oblast is still ideologically weak despite the PRAVDA article of 2 July which "so justly exposed" that aspect of life in the Ukraine. What the Communist Party organizations appear to neglect, according to the report, is the most important element of their work: "Not enough attention has been paid to various manifestations of Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism." The same refrain is taken up again by RADYANSKA UKRAINA (12 December) in a warning against further ideological aberrations in the Republic, "above all against the expressions of Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism." The Marxist-Leninist theory, according to the same editorial, is still "unsatisfactorily propagated" among the unions of Soviet writers, composers, artists and architects.

ZVYAZDA (1 December) looks into the arts and professions of the Belorussian SSR and declares that they are "lagging behind the times" (otstayut ot zhizni). The Belorussian playwrights are subject to particular censure for "failing to produce a single play" about the everyday life of the Republic. Most of the editorial barbs, however, are reserved for the men of letters who "failed to create a single work... on the selfless friendship between the Russian and Belorussian people..." No shining example of creative ability has been produced by the Republic's composers, the paper complains. There is not a single operatic work reflecting "the production efforts" of the Belorussian people during the postwar Five-Year Plan. In addition to the ideological weakness, the editorial concludes, artistic and literary standards are also still "very low."

PARTY ACTIVITIES

Most of the criticism of Party life is diffuse in character and is familiarly directed against suppression of criticism, lax Communist supervision and insufficient enthusiasm about Marxist-Leninist propaganda and studies. PRAVDA (2 December) charges "deficiencies in the attitude" to Marxist-Leninist theory on the part of Ulyanovsk and Kostroma oblast Party organizations. These deficiencies, according to the paper, are reflected in the "low ideological level" of the Communist propaganda workers. VELIKOLUKSKAYA PRAVDA (4 December) lists cases of open suppression of criticism and brands it an "unparty attitude." When a worker of the Velikoluksky-Stroy Trust rose at a meeting to criticize certain shortcomings, says the editorial, he was cut short by the head of the trust with the remark "enough blather, more work!" Criticism and self-criticism are often "of a very low level," and primary Party organizations "keep to a low political standard" and lose contact with the problems of the day. The paper adds that "good bolsheviks... openly expose weaknesses and shortcomings, disclose culprits by name and criticize without regard to personality."

Lack of organization and control and formalism are still "much in evidence" in some rayon and primary Party Committees, according to VELIKOLUKSKAYA PRAVDA of 8 December. Paper work and impassioned speeches appear to be the chief pre-occupation of the local Party officials while their real duties--checking the implementation of Party decisions--are neglected. This, says the paper, is a "shameful fact" and a "grave error on their part."

The low standard of Party propaganda seminars is the object of a KRASNY SEVER editorial discussion heard on 8 December from Volegda, Ivanovo oblast. Poor lecturing and inefficient teaching, says the editorial "is the weakest spot" in the training of propagandists. According to one student, quoted by the paper, the Party seminars "reveal absolutely nothing new" beyond textual quotations from the "Short History of the Bolshevik Party" already known to all students. This type of Party education and propaganda is said to be continuing in Totemsky, Syamzhesky, Babushkinsky, Sholsky and other rayons.

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Abuses and nepotism in the selection and distribution of Communist cadres are discussed in a STALINGRADSKAYA PRAVDA editorial of 12 December. The "vicious practice" of white-washing shortcomings and errors is still in use in Zhdanovsky and Medveditsa rayons. A number of unsuitable workers, instead of being dismissed, are shifted from one responsible position to another. The evil consequences of this nepotism, according to the editorial, are also carried to another extreme: some honest workers are placed in responsible jobs without proper guidance, and "their first error, which may be a minor one, is immediately punished." Where cadres are not watched and properly instructed, the paper continues, "sudden surprising revelations" are often made. Such was the case in Mikhailovka rayon, for example, where 40 people have been dismissed from responsible positions in the past year-and-a-half simply because their qualifications had not been checked.

ANTI-RELIGIOUS CAMPAIGN

Proletarian Morality Versus Religion: Western church officials are frequent targets of Soviet radio criticism but religion per se is almost never criticized, particularly since the reestablishment of the Orthodox Church in the USSR. What appears like a sudden departure from this practice is seen in a long article by Kolonitsky (27 November). Comparing Communist or proletarian morality with religious morality, the author asserts that Communist morality "is by its very nature international." Religion with its mysticism and the "authority of an invented god," on the other hand, is something without which "bourgeois morality cannot manage." Religion, he says, is designed to "kill all will power" and independent activity in man and to make him submissive to the powers that be. The reason for Kolonitsky's sudden attack on religion may be inferred from his references to the USSR where religious morality admittedly still has to be fought: "...in our country Communist morality has been squeezing out religious morality and is still continuing to do so." The author's concluding remark indicates that free religion is not so compatible with Soviet conditions as might be thought:

Religious morality continues to play a reactionary part under our socialist conditions. ...Being a most viable conservative ideology, it impedes the overcoming of all other remnants of the past. Communist education... is therefore indissolubly connected with unmasking and overcoming religious morality.

A report from Uralsk (1 December) rebukes the local officials for the "badly conducted" anti-religious campaign in Chapayevsky rayon where "survivals of the past" are said to be "still manifesting themselves." There is no elaboration. A dispatch from Riga (in Latvian, 7 December) speaks of the teachers of Kuldiga rayon who "are not extending anti-religious propaganda work in schools and among the population."

AGRICULTURE

Appeals to eliminate the two admitted weak spots in agriculture--lack of winter premises for the livestock and tractor deficiencies--are aired on most of the regional transmitters. The near failure of the three-year agricultural study courses is deplored by PRAVDA and other sources, and is held responsible for much of the collective farm mismanagement.

RABOTCHIY PUT (4 December) bemoans the lack of well-equipped cattle premises at the stockbreeding farms despite the great supplies of timber and other building materials at their disposal. Can there be any talk about erecting winter barns, the editorial complains, when in some of the rayons as in Kasplyansky and Baturinsky, for example, they have not even bothered to organize permanent building brigades. In other rayons, where such brigades are on hand the available resources are said to be inadequately utilized (ne ispolzuyutsia polnostyu). Among them are Novoduginsky, Krasnininsky, Znamenskiy, Dorogobuzhskiy, and Kholm-Zhirkovsky rayons. KIROVOGRADSKA PRAVDA (in Ukrainian, 4 December) reminds its readers that among the assurances recently given the All-Union Communist Party by the Central Committee of the Ukrainian Party is one about the preparation of adequate winter shelters for the livestock. This, the editorial remarks, should be pushed faster than is the case at present, and all that is needed to accomplish the task is self-denying labor (samootverzheny trud).

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The 3-year stockbreeding plan has not been fulfilled by "many" collective farms of Poltava oblast, according to ZARYA POLTAVSHCHINY (7 December). The squandering of stock and insufficient fodder supplies are cited as the chief reasons. No details are offered as to the particular areas affected or the nature of stock squandering. The paper merely urges "every effort" to remedy the situation as soon as possible. The failure to increase the communal livestock according to plan also provides the substance for a PSKOVSKAYA PRAVDA editorial on 7 December. The editorial admits that the 3-year stockbreeding plan for the oblast as a whole is short of the target and that this "alarming situation" (trevozhnoye sostoyanie) is not even being investigated by the appropriate agricultural officials. Inadequate cattle premises, faulty distribution of winter fodder and, above all else, unqualified stockbreeders (nekvalifitsirovannye zhivotnovody) are said to account for the situation. Stockbreeders' education is also the subject of a SOVETSKAYA SIBIR report from Novosibirsk (8 December). This lack of trained personnel, the report says, has brought about a situation that demands immediate action: "Serious shortcomings in the work are revealed. The fodder supplies at the farms are low and the condition of the stock is poor. Care of stock is badly organized."

The mistakes of last year when tractors often left for the fields in "dilapidated conditions" are being repeated this year, according to CHERVONY ZAPORIZHYYE (1 December). The oblast tractor-repair plan is "still far from satisfactory," schedules are not followed and "no measures are being taken" to speed up the repair work. The head of the oblast Agricultural Administration, Bondarenko, is blamed for the carelessness (bezzhurnyst) in management which brought about an "extremely unsatisfactory" situation in a number of machine-tractor stations. Particularly affected are the Belozerska, Chapanevka, Khortytska, and Haychynska stations, as well as those in Veliko-Tokmakskiy rayon.

"Extremely unsatisfactory" is also the verdict in the case of many of the Kirovograd oblast machine-tractor stations, according to KIROVOGRADSKA PRAVDA of 11 December. These stations are reported to have fallen so far behind in their repair work so as to jeopardize the successful outcome of the agricultural plan. The Malo-Konyshnyansky, Tishkovsky, Novo-Starodubsky, Khmelevsky, Shestokulsky and Komintern stations are named as the worst of the lot.

Among the other sources reporting slow tractor repairs and other technical difficulties are:

SOVETSKAYA SIBIR, 4 December: The level of work at many machine-tractor stations does not yet fully answer the increased demands. The excellent equipment is not used satisfactorily.

ORLOVSKAYA PRAVDA, 7 December: The directing authorities did not organize such important measures as...the development of technology in the repair of tractors and combines and many other problems.

KURSKAYA PRAVDA, 12 December: A number of machine-tractor stations still have not completed a fifth of the planned tractor repairs for the fourth quarter.

The agricultural study courses designed to improve the training of collective farm management and labor again claim the attention of PRAVDA and a few regional sources. Lectures by agricultural experts to farmers are few and far between, says PRAVDA (3 December), and the 3-year courses have not been properly organized in some areas. Chernigov oblast is cited as an example of how not to do it. The local Party organizations are said to be taking no interest in promoting the studies, leaving the schools to their own fate. ORLOVSKAYA PRAVDA (9 December) complains of constantly falling attendance in the agricultural school network, and warns against a repetition of the previous academic year when only 9,500 out of the planned 30,000 managed to stick it out to the end. "Similar shortcomings exist this year as well." Irregular classes and the "low level" of instruction explain the unwillingness of the students to attend, according to the paper. The training situation in Uritsky, Shablykinsky, Sudbishchensky, Stanovlyanskiy, Zalegoshchenskiy, Korsakovskiy, Russko-Brodskiy and Glazunovskiy rayons is said to be "causing much concern." Low attendance and too few schools also provide the subject for editorial discussion by VELIKOLUKSKAYA PRAVDA (13 December). In Zharovskiy rayon alone, for example, only five schools are functioning out of the ten specified in the plan. In Kuyinsky rayon, the agricultural schools are attended by 142 collective farmers instead of the required 340, and in Krasnogorodskiy rayon the total attendance is less than 50 per cent. School progress is "not much better" in Penovskiy and other rayons.

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Information on income distribution in the collective farms is fragmentary. PSKOVSKAYA PRAVDA (2 December) declares that such distribution presupposes the successful completion of all agricultural operations. Many collectives, the paper says, are "hiding behind the average figures" of the oblast but are actually far behind in their work. Income distribution may be adversely affected in such rayons as Gdovsky, Karamyshevsky, Novorzhevsky and Pskov where "not one fifth of the grain destined for sowing" has been sorted. Referring to the same topic in a different context, ZARYA VOSTOKA (8 December) calls upon the collective farm bookkeepers who "enjoy wide powers under regulations approved by the USSR Government" to help keep the kolkhoz accounts straight and to insure "vigilant protection against the enemies of public property."

Indivisible funds (nedelimie fondy), as mentioned in a previous CPW report, are also in a sense untouchable funds. They may be increased at any time but never reduced without a special Party decision at a certain time of the year. Such decisions are usually taken upon the recommendation of a general meeting (obshcheye sobranie) of the collective farmers involved. These "financial rules" are not strictly observed by many collective farms of Novosibirsk oblast, according to SOVETSKAYA SIBIR (12 December). In the Stalin kolkhoz (Barabinsk rayon), "collective farm funds are being squandered." Far from paying on its capital deposit debt (zadolzhennost po kapitalnomu vlozheniu), the kolkhoz is going deeper into debt. Its September debt of 18,700 rubles is now said to have risen to "nearly" 40,000. Another collective farm, in the Chistoozerniy rayon, simply "took about 20,000 rubles" from the indivisible fund this year.

A broadcast BOLSHEVIK editorial (9 December) emphasizes the "paramount importance" of indivisible funds and their proper utilization (pravilnoye izpolzovanie). This, says the editorial, is particularly true in view of the recent enlargement of small collective farms. The indivisible funds of the enlarged farms (ukрупnennye kolkhozy) are greater and therefore require stricter control. The chief editorial emphasis, however, is on the familiar advantages of large farming units which in the Ukraine alone are said to have contributed to an increase of "almost 57 million" puds of grain over 1950.

INDUSTRY

Better Production Quality Needed: Industrial shortcomings are aired by PRAVDA and IZVESTIA and repeated on some regional transmitters. The drive for better production quality and lower costs, begun some time ago, appears to have been renewed with increased vigor. Only a few plants are singled out for official strictures as examples of substandard production and inordinate waste of raw materials, but the tenor of the official criticism suggests widespread inefficiency. The race for high quantitative production indices is to be slowed down, and quality is to be stressed instead. "What the State needs, says PRAVDA (1 December), is not just any fulfillment and overfulfillment of the Plan but only the kind of fulfillment that would insure the needed production for the national economy." (dlya gosudarstva nuzhno ne vsyakoye vypolnenie perevypolnenie plana, a tolko takoye, kotoroye obespechivayet narodnoye khozaistvo nuzhnoi emu produktsiyey). Our present efforts, the paper continues, should be directed toward greater economy and less waste: "economize raw materials, save every nail!" (syryo ekonomit, kazhdiy гвозд berech!)

IZVESTIA (12 December) discusses the same theme and reiterates verbatim PRAVDA's injunction quoted in Russian above. A number of plants, the paper claims, while producing high quantitative indices are "systematically failing" to show any improvement in their production quality. Substandard production with its resultant losses and waste is tolerated on a large scale. The "Irbit" Motorcycle Works of Sverdlovsk oblast, for example, has exceeded its cost-reduction plan by 1.9% but its losses through rejects (brak) and substandard production amounted to two million rubles. Several million rubles' worth of goods were rejected (zabrakovany) in the past ten months at the Denpropetrovsk Metallurgical Works. The situation is said to be particularly bad in Lithuania where the production of the "prescribed range of goods" (assortiment) is apparently not taken seriously while consumers' goods are often neglected. In the Kaunas stocking factory, for example, a number of consumer items "were not produced at all" last October. Similar delinquencies are attributed to other industrial plants whose managers "blatantly violate State discipline." This, the paper intimates, is due to lack of prodding from above: "It is curious why the Ministry of Light Industry of the Lithuanian SSR is so tolerant of those factory managers...." (Neponiatno, pochemu ministerstvo legkoi promyshlennosti litovskoi SSR nak terpimo otnositsia k rukovoditeliam fabrik....)

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Among the other major industrial evils requiring immediate attention, according to PRAVDA (11 December), are overstaffing of administrative organs, swollen payrolls, excessive reserves of raw materials in the warehouses and the inevitable rejects. The production problem, the paper argues, should be tackled simultaneously from both ends: reduction of costs on the one hand and fewer rejects on the other.

Overstaffing of administrative organs, payroll over-expenditures, excessive accumulation of raw materials in the warehouses and losses through rejects cannot be tolerated.

Russian version:

Nelzya terpet izlishestv v shtatakh upravlencheskogo apparata, dopuskat kakikh-libo pereraskhodov fondov zarabotnoi platy, nakoplenia na skladakh chrezmernykh zapasov syrya i materialov, poter ot braka.

Economy and saving, PRAVDA continues, are an integral feature of socialist production (neot'emlinaya cherta sotsialisticheskogo proizvodstva), and must be enforced everywhere without exception. The importance of this drive is again underlined in the paper's reminder to all Party organizations of their new duties to channel the national effort toward higher quality and lower costs of production.

The trade unions and their part in the campaign for better production are discussed in PRAVDA of 12 December. Theoretically responsible for the success of socialist competition and greater production, the trade unions are rebuked for having fallen down on the job. It is known, the editorial claims, that until quite recently the trade unions, just like the Party and Soviet organizations, bothered very little about the quality of production, directing all their efforts toward quantity. The fourth plenum of the Central Council of Trade Unions has recently adopted a number of decisions to improve socialist competition for quality in industry, but some of the trade unions have still not "adapted themselves to the new situation" (vsyo eshche ne perestroilis) and continue to maintain a State-bureaucratic attitude. (prodolzhayut pokazennomu odnositsya) In the Makeyevka Metal Works, to cite but one example, the trade union shop committee did not even bother to tell the workers about the new decisions of the Central Trade Union Council.

The quality-quantity topic is again discussed on 14 December, this time from a technological point of view. Without the introduction of advanced technology (peredovaya tekhnika), says PRAVDA, there can be no production quality at all, only rejects. There are still many plants where the production of the latest machinery is somehow "adapted to a low level of technology (uzhivayetsia s nizkim urovnem tekhnologii). In some plants, like the Kalinin Railway Coach Works, outdated production methods are still employed, while in others, where new technological methods have allegedly been introduced, the old system is continued and the new is left intact in the textbooks.

Slow preparations for winter production and unwarranted delays in the oblast industrial progress are noted by STALINGRADSKAYA PRAVDA (2 December). Lack of mechanization of labor-consuming work in the lumber industry is blamed for its poor performance by VELIKOLUKSKAYA PRAVDA of 8 December.

Some managers and directors of forestry collectives....fail to make full use of all the available machinery....As a result, in the two months of the present season the (Velikoluksky-Les) timber trust failed to complete even 25% of its quarterly target....

Both individual workers and entire enterprises of the lumber industry are lagging behind their assigned targets, the editorial concludes.

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PSKOVSKAYA PRAVDA (13 December) angrily denounces broken pledges on the part of industrial management which, the editorial implies, has almost become standard procedure: "Every month the lagging enterprises pledge themselves to improve matters but this resolve remains on paper." These matters refer to qualitative production indices, but "many" of those enterprises are said to be lagging in their quantity production as well, in the "hope that their deficiencies will be made good by the leading enterprises." Among them are the Gdovsky Timber Works, (Zavod)-Kirpich and many others.

MISCELLANEOUS

Indications of continued southward migration also mentioned in the CPW report of last April are seen in a few short items broadcast from the Ukraine in the past two weeks. These reports are given in the form of letters from the new settlers to their friends and relatives describing their new prosperity and inducing them to follow their example. Dnepropetrovsk and Nikolayev oblasts and the Kakhovka construction site are mentioned among the settlement areas. The exodus of farmers has apparently been taking place from Lutsk oblast. One of the new settlers writes home that for her 360 work days she received 690 kilograms of wheat and rye, 130 kilograms of sunflower, watermelons, apples and 718 rubles "on top of that." A report on 7 December says that "many collective farmers from Lukovsky rayon moved last year and this spring to the southern oblasts of the Ukraine." Others are being asked by the new settlers to join them and many are willing to follow: "Every day applications are being received from peasants who want to move to the southern oblasts." Another letter from a southern settler says that the farmers in the Kakhovka locality are receiving, among other things, 2 kilograms of wheat and seven and a half rubles per labor day."

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